



South Carolina  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

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## **Funds Available to Help SC Farmers Improve Food Safety**

### ***SCDA Allocates Federal Funds for Produce Safety, Other Farm Support***

**COLUMBIA** – The South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) is proud to announce the On-Farm Improvement Cost Share Program. Through USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant funding administered by SCDA, farmers who are covered by the Produce Safety Rule can receive reimbursements up to \$2,000 per year per farm for on-farm food safety improvements.

Examples of improvements that may be eligible for funding include handwashing stations, worker training resources and harvest bins. These measures help farms reduce the risk of foodborne illness in the fruits and vegetables they grow.

Our Produce Safety team recognizes that many South Carolina produce farms identify needed improvements but lack the money to implement changes. This program is designed to help farms make these improvements and comply with the requirements of the federal [Produce Safety Rule](#).

“I hope South Carolina produce farmers will explore this opportunity to upgrade their food safety protections,” said South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers. “These cost-share grants are an excellent use of taxpayer funds, as they support farms that are already demonstrating a commitment to food safety.”

Funds are available on a first-come first-served basis until depleted. The deadline to apply for reimbursement for this cost share is August 1, 2022.

Please visit [agriculture.sc.gov/grants](https://agriculture.sc.gov/grants) to download the application, request an on-farm evaluation and learn about next steps.

In all, the South Carolina Department of Agriculture has allocated more than \$600,000 from the 2021 USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to 12 projects to increase the competitiveness of specialty crops in South Carolina. Funded projects include research to improve strawberry, watermelon and peach crops, and packaging for produce farmers. The full project list is online at [ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp](https://ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp).

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